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Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Security Council
Seventy-second year

Identical letters dated 11 April 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement dated 9 April 2017 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia on the so-called elections and referendum in the occupied Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex issued as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 32, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kaha **Imnadze**
Permanent Representative

17-06103 (E) 260417

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Annex to the identical letters dated 11 April 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia on the so-called elections and referendum in the occupied Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia condemns the so-called presidential elections and referendum held on 9 April 2017 in the occupied Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia.

According to international law, any so-called elections or referendum in the occupied territories of Georgia are illegal and cannot have any legal effect. This provocative act by the Russian occupation forces grossly violates the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia and represents yet another attempt to legitimize the consequences of several waves of ethnic cleansing, military invasion and ongoing occupation of Georgian regions.

Holding the so-called referendum on changing the name of one of the oldest Georgian regions to "Republic of South Ossetia - State of Alania", similar to one of the federal subjects of the Russian Federation, aims at laying the groundwork for its illegal annexation. This intention has also been vividly demonstrated by the recently signed so-called agreement on the incorporation of the unlawful military units of the Tskhinvali region into the armed forces of the Russian Federation.

By such provocative actions, the Russian Federation intentionally impedes the efforts of peaceful conflict resolution, including within the Geneva international discussions, and hinders confidence-building between the communities divided by occupation lines.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia appeals to the international community to make a due assessment of the illegal so-called elections and referendum and calls upon the Russian Federation to respect the fundamental principles of international law and withdraw its military forces from the Georgian territory.